



# San Pasqual Academy

Home of the Mighty Dragons!

*Bulletin*

December 2008

## Facts-At-A-Glance

As of this writing...

- 133 youth are living at the Academy.
- Over 35 students are participating in paid internships.
- Internships include two youth with the Red Shirt Program at Palomar Hospital, one youth with the San Pasqual Volunteer Fire Department Academy, and three youth with a Sempra Energy Video Project.
- Five Academy youth have paid employment in the local community.
- 14 grandparents are part of the San Pasqual Academy Neighbors Program.

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## Academy Celebrates 7th Birthday!



On October 21st, Academy youth, alumni, campus staff, and volunteers celebrated the Academy's seventh birthday. This first-in-the-nation residential education program has come along way since the first youth were placed on campus in 2001!

The Academy offers a stable living situation and an individualized academic plan for youth living on the campus. Over the past seven years, additional support services have been added to the program to better prepare the youth for their academics, the world of work and life after foster care.

Here's a summary of the programs offered to support Academy youth:

An intergenerational mentoring program, which now boasts 14 grandparents living on campus, provides the youth with an extra dose of nurturing, guidance and wisdom.

A comprehensive independent living skills (ILS) program is woven throughout the campus, offering youth ample opportunities to gain experience in household management, budgeting, accessing healthcare, transportation and community resources. ILS programming helps youth plan for their future aca-

demics, employment and housing.

State funding for the Transitional Housing Program-Plus created new housing options for Academy graduates both on- and off-campus. The subsidized housing and case management services provide the extra support needed to reduce/eliminate homelessness when youth transition out of foster care, particularly in such difficult economic times.

Remediation services in reading, writing and mathematics and offered by UROK complements the high school program on campus.

## The Academy has Room to Grow

What do you get when you mix the Academy with private donors, HomeAid (a national non-profit organization dedicated to providing housing and support services for the homeless) and Fairfield Residential, LLC?

Six new homes, and room for the Academy to grow!

That's right! Early in 2009, 48 more youth will be able to call the Academy "home."

Just like the existing 18 homes on campus, each of the new two-story homes offer youth a common living room, dining room, kitchen,

and laundry area. Two youth will share a bedroom, which may be personalized through paint color, art, posters, etc. Two bedrooms will have a bathroom in common. Each home also includes a private suite for houseparents, who provide care and supervision for the youth.

With the Academy's licensed capacity increasing to 184 beds in the very near future, now is a good time for Child Welfare Services social workers to review their caseloads for youth, ages 12 to 18, who may be appropriate for the Academy.

Attorneys and Court-Appointed Special Advocates for foster youth are also encouraged to submit a referral for youth who may benefit from Academy services.



For more information, visit [www.sanpasqualacademy.org](http://www.sanpasqualacademy.org) or contact HHSA Academy Screener, Eric Warner, at (760) 233-6283.



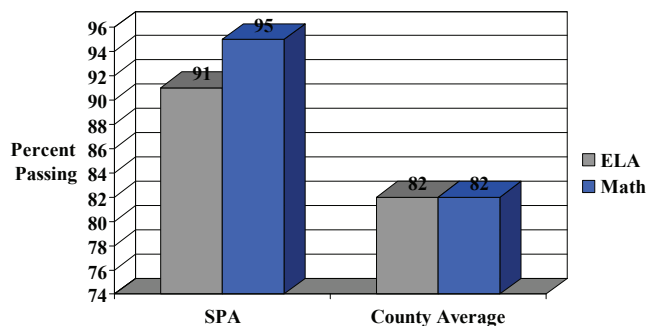
# School Posts High Marks



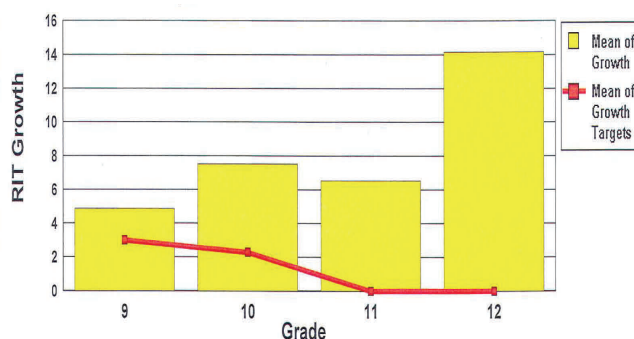
Tenth grade students attending the Academy's on-site high school, operated by the San Diego County Office of Education—Juvenile Court and Community Schools, surpassed the County average in the Spring 2008 10th Grade CAHSEE Census. The CAHSEE is used to determine reading, writing and mathematics proficiency. Students must pass both the English-language arts and Mathematics exams to earn a diploma in the state of California. Take a look to the top chart.

In addition to their outstanding performance on the CAHSEE, Academy students exceeded projected targets on the 2008 Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) exam in Math. The MAP is used to as a pre and post assessment to determine students' yearly academic growth in reading, language usage, and mathematics. The bottom chart measures the average yearly growth our students experienced in mathematics over the course of the 07-08 school year. Five points growth is considered significant. The red line represents the norm average growth for all students across the state of California. San Pasqual Academy's (SPA) average growth was significant in each class and far exceeded the norm group for the state.

Spring 2008 10th Grade CAHSEE Census



2008 MAP Results (Mathematics)



## 'Tis the Season

For many high school students around the country, fall is a time to finalize which colleges to apply to, figure out how to complete those daunting financial aid forms and find scholarships that might help with the cost of higher education.

At the Academy, these tasks are no different for graduating seniors. Fortunately, assistance is available from campus staff. All potential graduates participate in senior seminars facilitated by school counselor, Mr. Orozco, and Career Center manager, Ms. Taylor. The Seminar focuses on preparing the students for college entrance as well as the world of work.

Students also benefit from having Jaymie Gonzaga from the Palomar College EOPS office at the campus Career Center every week. He provides help with applications to community colleges and information on EOPS.

## Dragons' Sports Wrap-Up

### Football

The Dragons Football Team finished up their first season of 11-Man Football on November 14<sup>th</sup> with a 41-14 loss against Julian High School. Overall, the Dragons posted a 3-4 league record for the season.



### Volleyball



The Lady Dragons had a great volleyball season, making it to the Division V playoffs! Despite their best efforts, the Lady Dragons lost to Lutheran High School, 3-2, to close out the season in mid-November.

### Basketball

Basketball season is here! The Dragons, part of the CIF Citrus West League, kicked-off the season on December 2<sup>nd</sup> with tournaments around the County. League play begins on January 16<sup>th</sup> and the season runs through February 18<sup>th</sup>.



Check out the 2008-2009 Boys and Girls Basketball schedule at [www.sanpasqualacademy.org](http://www.sanpasqualacademy.org) and support the Dragons on the court.

**Go Dragons!**

## Campus Produce Travels the County

Tomatoes, peppers, squash, beans, cucumbers...you name it, and it is probably growing in the Academy's organic farm! While produce from the farm stocks the campus Cyber Café and eighteen homes on campus, there is still a surplus of fruits and vegetables left at the end of the day.

The Academy's Agriculture (Ag) Program is the recipient of a three-year U.S.D.A. Community Food Projects grant. The program's goal is to expand the existing farm into a 20-acre, youth-run, sustainable enterprise that provides fresh, organic produce to Academy residents, other low-income community members, and local restaurants and markets. Subsequently, these groups will incorporate more produce into their diets and will be healthier with fewer incidents of obesity.



In keeping with the purpose of the grant, the Academy is distributing excess produce on a weekly basis to other New Alternatives, Inc. facilities serving foster youth. The cafeteria managers at the Hillcrest and South Bay campuses are thrilled to have fresh, locally grown produce to use in their menus! Together, these programs serve up to 169 foster youth.

As the Ag Program continues to grow, it is anticipated that the produce will also be sold to top-notch restaurants and local markets!

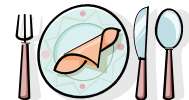
Keep an eye out for Dragon Organics produce across the County!

## Dragons Catering

Sparked by the Culinary Arts class offered by Johnny Ellison, Cyber Café Manager, Academy youth have started a business enterprise called Dragons Catering. Through this catering service, youth will gain tangible work skills which can be transferred to other employment opportunities and career paths down the road.

The youth will have hands-on experience in public relations, conducting site visits, menu planning, invoice and budget development, event planning, and, of course, the art of catering social and business events.

Youth have already completed preliminary work for two upcoming events: Casey Family Program's Kinship Holiday Party on December 18<sup>th</sup> and the YES Transition Network's Youth Holiday Party on December 22<sup>nd</sup>!



## Employer Advisory Board

In the world of work, *who* you know can sometimes be the key to finding just the right job or learning about a career path you wouldn't otherwise have considered. At the Academy, the Employer Advisory Board (EAB), which has been in place for over two years, provides just this connection for Academy youth with local community businesses.

Seven members, who represent the fields of city management, technology, construction, food services, hospitality, education and banking, the EAB, meet monthly in the campus Career Center. The EAB have provided Academy youth with internships at their place of business, offered tours of local businesses and presented work readiness topics in the classroom. Career Center staff draw on the EAB's expertise to review the Academy's work readiness curriculum and incorporate new strategies and ideas into the classroom.



In addition, the EAB serves as a link to community business resources such as the Kiwanis and SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" and provides a volunteer base for employment-related activities. For instance, the EAB conducts mock interviews with the graduating seniors and provides constructive feedback on their resumes and interviewing skills. This preparation may give the Academy graduates just the edge they need to compete in today's challenging economic market!

Overall, the EAB's participation with Academy youth and alumni is a win-win situation for all!

## Giving Back is Part of the Academy Spirit

While youth placed at the Academy are often the recipients of generous donations and opportunities, they return the gift by helping others in need. Community service activities are part of the monthly calendar and an expectation of being a good citizen on campus. Sherry Brideau, Academy Volunteer Coordinator, matches youth with activities that best match their interest.

Leg-up Ranch in Julian, a supervised riding facility that focuses on those with life threatening illnesses or physical and mental handicaps, is a popular spot for youth to work as ranch hands. After their work is done, the youth are able to ride the horses too...quite a treat for them.

Big Animals for Little Kids, an all-

volunteer organization that entertains at-risk children by dressing up in animal costumes, is also a first choice for many youth. They have regularly helped Big Animals with their annual Beach Party Fundraiser and holiday events.

For some, this is their first time volunteering and the experience keeps them coming back for more!



For more information about how you can support the Academy with donations, scholarships for graduating seniors or volunteer activities, please contact Debby Syverson at (619) 435-4557.

## San Pasqual Academy

A Bridge to  
Knowledge, Support and Hope

Check out the Academy website at:  
[www.sanpasqualacademy.org](http://www.sanpasqualacademy.org)

### San Pasqual Academy Neighbors (SPAN)

For the past year, the grandparents of the SPAN program have called fifth-wheel trailers home because their residences on campus were destroyed by the Witch Creek Fire in October 2007. In November 2008, a large part of the month was taken up with moving the grandparents into their new modular homes. It was an exciting time, according to Program Director John Scholte, as the grandparents made their new places "home."

The SPAN program, which has a total of 14 grandparents, is a showcase of talents. In setting-up their new area on campus, Grandma and Grandpa Tupper, who have a wonderful "green thumb," immediately began creating the "grandparents' park." It will have a large fountain, koi pond and two gazebos with much greenery, and, of course, hummingbird feeders. The "park" will be large enough for all the grandparents to enjoy and to host the program's monthly meeting during the summer. It will also be a wonderful space for the Academy youth to visit with the grandparents.

Despite their move in November, the grandparents definitely found time to participate in their regular activities with the youth and alumni. Activities included baking birthday brownies, teaching cooking classes, playing Frisbee golf, working on sewing projects, assisting with college and scholarship applications, harvesting produce from the farm, and involving the youth in both a chess and camera club!

But one of the most special activities the grandparents enjoy is spending the holidays with youth and alumni on campus! From dressing up in costumes on Halloween to sharing a meal together for Thanksgiving, the time the grandparents share with the youth and alumni is invaluable.

Fun  
Togetherness

### Family Day

Laughter  
Memories

September 20th was no ordinary day at San Pasqual Academy...it was Family Day! Approximately 145 family members enthusiastically participated. Although they had an opportunity to meet with the residential, teaching and HHSA staff, the focus was all about family and fun!



The event kicked-off with a Talent Show in the auditorium, complete with a finale of "We are Family." A BBQ lunch followed in the Cyber Café. The meal provided needed energy for softball, basketball and volleyball! In the boys' recreation room, guests played pool and in the girls' recreation room, younger siblings enjoyed an inflatable jumper, music, coloring and face painting.

Grandparents, who live on campus as part of the intergenerational mentoring program, offered a paper hat making station alongside artwork created by Academy youth. In the Cyber Café, photography by the youth was on exhibit, while videos of Academy graduations and Dragon sports were shown. Guests were encouraged to use their creative talents in making foam frames for pictures taken of their family during the day.

Academy youth proudly toured their families around campus and had a chance to "show-off" their homes and personalized bedrooms. Family members really "appreciated seeing the kids' rooms" and said they felt welcomed by everyone.

### Did You Know...

Part of the Academy vision is to keep sibling groups together whenever possible. Currently, the Academy is home to eighteen sibling groups. That's 38 youth, accounting for nearly one-third of the Academy population. Although siblings may not live in the same home on campus, they have ample opportunities to visit and maintain their family ties.

For youth whose siblings are not placed at the Academy, visits are coordinated to ensure that they remain connected. Plus, Academy youth participate in County-wide activities such as Camp Connect and Sibling "KINnections" events.

